

need to be aware of the fact that there certainly is no predisposition on this side of the aisle nor is there any predisposition on the part of the White House to allow that to happen. And assuming that the House and the Senate meet their responsibilities to pass a neutral short-term continuing resolution that would take us sometime into October so that Congress would have a chance to produce an omnibus appropriation bill, because I assume that that is going to happen, there is absolutely no reason to expect that there will be a government shutdown in the wings. I just do not see that happening.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the House will stand in recess for approximately 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 21 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess for approximately 15 minutes.

□ 1036

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. EWING) at 10 o'clock and 36 minutes a.m.

#### APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H.R. 4101, AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 4101) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes, with a Senate amendment thereto, disagree to the Senate amendment, and agree to the conference asked by the Senate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Mexico?

There was no objection.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT OFFERED BY MS. KAPTUR

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct conferees.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. KAPTUR moves that in resolving the differences between the House and Senate, the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the bill H.R. 4101, be instructed to agree with the provisions of the Senate amendment which provide funding for agricultural disaster assistance and reserve inventories, including the designation of such funds as an emergency requirement under section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, and with no offsetting reductions as provided in the Senate amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) and

the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. SKEEN) each will be recognized for 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to explain my motion to instruct conferees on this agricultural appropriations bill, and fundamentally this motion would require the conferees on H.R. 4101, which is the 1999 appropriations bill for agriculture and related agencies, to agree to the language in the Senate bill which provides funding for agricultural disaster assistance, including reserve inventories, and designates that assistance as emergency spending without offsets.

Mr. Speaker, there is a real crisis facing most American farmers and rural communities today, and many have been unduly affected by the drought and other extreme and unusual weather conditions. Some are suffering the impact of crop disease, and others have been impacted by falling farm prices and an increasing inability to obtain credit. While the rest of the country may be experiencing economic recovery, thousands of farm and ranch families and the communities that depend on them have been left behind.

But the current farm crisis is one that will eventually touch every American, rural and urban, if we do not address this problem and this set of circumstances immediately.

The Senate agriculture appropriation bill provides a total of \$521 million in emergency spending to begin to assist farmers in addressing this crisis. My motion does not address the adequacy of the funding level. That provision was added in July before the true extent of the summer drought and its impact on crops and livestock could be known. The appropriate funding level is something that we on the Committee on Appropriations will be discussing with the administration, with the authorizing committee and the Members most impacted by this crisis as we move to completion of this appropriations conference.

But my motion does address the designation of the funding provided to assist farmers in crisis as emergency spending, as defined under the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, with no offsetting reductions in other areas. This has symmetry with the Senate bill.

I know some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will argue that the Congress has been offsetting emergency spending since 1994 and that this emergency should be treated no differently than the other supplemental spending bills we have passed. Well, it seems to us that we have found a way to bend these self-imposed rules on offsets in selected emergencies. We have done so in the supplemental appropriation bill passed last year. We offset only domestic emergency spending, not the defense-related emergency spending included in that bill. Surely our

Nation's farmers are as deserving of emergency assistance and designation, particularly this year, as have been our military forces in prior years, and the offsets used for the earlier domestic supplemental bills were primarily funds from the HUD section 8 housing program, funding which we will eventually need to pay back in that program to ensure adequate low-income housing for low-income citizens, particularly the elderly who need this program.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot continue to rob Peter to pay Paul when it comes to addressing funding for natural disasters and other emergencies. It is time to abandon the so-called budget shell games and face our responsibilities and address the real emergencies facing our country today.

Mr. Speaker, this farm emergency is real. Several of my colleagues who are here on the floor have districts more directly impacted by this crisis, and I will be pleased to yield to them so that they can discuss the severity of this crisis and the immediate impact on their constituents. I ask that the House support this motion to instruct conferees and send a message to America's farmers that we recognize the impact of this farm crisis, that we recognize the contributions that farmers and ranchers make to this country's economic success and the well-being of our families and that we are going to act in a responsible way to assure that they get the assistance they need to get beyond this crisis and continue to ensure the productivity of this Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on the motion to instruct and that I may include tabular and extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Mexico?

There was no objection.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the distinguished ranking member of the subcommittee, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR), bringing this matter before the House. We all know about the desperate situation in agriculture and the problems caused by flood and drought. These are the kinds of problems that we have solved together in a bipartisan fashion in the past, and I look forward to working in that same fashion again in conference to help our farmers and ranchers.

There already is a \$500 million emergency spending provision accepted by the other body. It is what we call a plug or a marker, and I refer my colleagues to the debate in the other body on the bill in which it was understood that the amount and scope of any emergency disaster plan for agriculture would have to wait for the administration to submit a detailed package. It is